

## Message Text

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ACTION FBO-01

INFO OCT-01 ARA-16 ADP-00 SS-15 PRS-01 PA-03 USIA-15 VO-03

SCA-01 /056 W

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R 201900Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2688

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINGSTON 2809

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CVIS JM

SUBJECT: VISAS ALAMO TWO

REF: KINGSTON 2598

1. DEPARTMENT'S VISA TASK FORCE DEPARTED AUGUST 18. WE APPRECIATE NOT ONLY THEIR VALUABLE TECHNICAL ADVICE, BUT ALSO THEIR HELPFUL AND POSITIVE ATTITUDE IN APPROACHING THE PROBLEM. THEIR THREE DAY VISIT INCLUDED SEVERAL SESSIONS WITH OUR OWN WORKING GROUP AND JOINT VISITS TO POSSIBLE SITES FOR HOUSING ALL OR A PORTION OF THE CONSULATE OPERATION. AFTER THESE STUDIES, WE, AND I BELIEVE THE DEPARTMENT GROUPS, REACHED THE JOINT CONCLUSION THAT IT IS IMPERATIVE TO MOVE AT LEAST THE VISA OPERATION TO NEW QUARTERS AS QUICKLY AS THIS CAN BE PHYSICALLY ACCOMPLISHED. ALTERNATIVES OF AN AMELIORATIVE OR COSMETIC NATURE WERE CONSIDERED BUT REJECTED AS MERE BAND-AIDS WHICH MIGHT BRIEFLY CONCEAL THE INFECTION, BUT WOULD FAIL TO PREVENT A SERIOUS HEMORRHAGE IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

2. SITE INSPECTIONS LOCATED SEVERAL BUILDINGS SUITABLE FOR HOUSING ALL OR A PORTION OF THE CONSULAR SECTION. NONE WAS IDEAL, BUT SEVERAL HAD GREAT ADVANTAGES OVER OUR PRESENT LOCATION. AFTER CAREFUL CONSIDERATION AND SPIRITED DISCUSSION, WE SETTLED ON THE EUREKA ROAD SITE AS THE ONE BEST MEETING OUR OBJECTIVES, I.E., A MEDIUM-TERM  
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SOLUTION GETTING RID OF THE WORST FEATURES OF THE PRESENT

SITUATION; A SOLUTION WHICH COULD BE EXECUTED IN SIX MONTHS OR LESS; AND A SOLUTION WHICH COULD BE ACHIEVED AT REASONABLE COST GIVEN THE LOCAL MARKET AND SPACE AVAILABILITIES.

3. THE EUREKA ROAD SITE CONSISTS OF 8,700 SQUARE FEET OF FLOOR SPACE ON TWO FLOORS OF A NEW BUILDING SCHEDULED FOR COMPLETION WITHIN 30 DAYS. WE WOULD LEASE THE ENTIRE BUILDING WHICH IS WELLSITUATED FROM ACCESS, SECURITY, AND PUBLIC RELATIONS VIEWPOINTS. ABOVE ALL, IT IS WELL OUTSIDE CONGESTED DOWNTOWN AREA WHERE EMBASSY PRESENTLY LOCATED. AVAILABLE SPACE ONLY SUFFICIENT FOR VISA OPERATION, AND PASSPORT, CITIZENSHIP AND PROTECTION UNIT WOULD HAVE TO REMAIN IN PRESENT EMBASSY. DEPARTMENT'S VISA TASK FORCE IS RETURNING WITH ALL RELEVANT SPACE AND COST DATA PLUS PRELIMINARY CONCEPT DRAWINGS. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT EUREKA ROAD SITE WAS THIS MISSION'S SECOND CHOICE AFTER PREFERRED HALF WAY TREE SITE, BUT WE FINALLY AGREED TO EMBRACE IT DUE TO ITS SUBSTANTIALLY LOWER COST.

4. A PROMPT DECISION PERMITTING US TO COMMIT OURSELVES TO THE OWNERS OF THE EUREKA ROAD SITE IS IMPERATIVE. THE BUILDING IS SCHEDULED FOR COMPLETION IN 30 DAYS AND FBO REPRESENTATIVE INDICATED BUILDERS MAY ACHIEVE THIS TARGET. MOREOVER, UNLESS DECISION MADE WITHIN TWO WEEKS, THE PROCESS OF INTERNAL DIVISION OF THE FLOOR SPACE WILL HAVE GONE SO FAR THAT THE COST WOULD BE CONSIDERABLY HIGHER EVEN IF WE SHOULD DECIDE TO GO AHEAD AT A LATER DATE. THIS IS BECAUSE PARTITIONS WHICH NEED NOT HAVE BEEN THERE WOULD HAVE TO BE TORN OUT BEFORE BUILDING COULD BE MODIFIED TO OUR PURPOSES. FINALLY, AT LEAST TWO BUSINESS FIRMS ARE REPORTEDLY INTERESTED IN LEASING THE SPACE. LANDLORDS WOULD PRESUMABLY PREFER U.S. GOVERNMENT AS A TENANT, BUT IF WE DELAY TOO LONG WE ARE LIKELY TO FIND SPACE NO LONGER AVAILABLE. IN THIS EVENT, WE WOULD HAVE TO BEGIN ANEW AND REQUEST DEPARTMENT'S TASK FORCE RETURN TO INSPECT NEW SITES.

5. ON THE POLITICAL SIDE, PUBLIC CONSCIOUSNESS AND REVULSION OVER THE PHYSICAL ASPECTS  
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OF OUR VISA OPERATION REMAINS HIGH. PRIME MINISTER MANLEY AND OTHER HIGH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS HAVE SURELY NOT FORGOTTEN THE ISSUE, AND MANLEY MAY RAISE IT AGAIN WITH THE SECRETARY SHOULD HE SEE HIM DURING THE 28TH UNGA IN NEW YORK IN SEPTEMBER. THOUGH THE ISSUE REMAINS AN ATTRACTIVE ONE FOR THE PRESS, ITS TREATMENT OF IT HAS BEEN LESS FREQUENT AND STRIDENT IN THE PAST SEVERAL WEEKS. THIS IS AT LEAST PARTLY BECAUSE I INFORMED

BOTH MAJOR NEWSPAPERS QUIETLY THAT I WAS TAKING A LOOK AT  
THE SITUATION TO SEE WHAT COULD BE DONE TO IMPROVE  
IT. I BELIEVE THEY ARE GIVING US A BREATHER AND A CHANCE  
TO PUT OUR HOUSE IN ORDER, BUT THERE IS NO DOUBT  
THEY WILL BE HOT ON THE TRAIL ONCE AGAIN IF IT BECOMES  
CLEAR THAT WE HAVE NO INTENTION OF TAKING POSITIVE STEPS  
WHERE FEASIBLE.

6. ACTION: DEPARTMENT'S AUTHORIZATION TO COMMIT OURSELVES  
TO THE OWNER OF THE EUREKA ROAD SITE ON MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE  
TERMS IS REQUESTED ON AN URGENT BASIS. HEWITT

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